

Week 34

Farewell and Be Warned!

Paul's emotional farewell message or encouragement and warning

In Acts chapter 20, we read about the Apostle Paul's final message to the Ephesians, a church that he had planted and nurtured for three years. Paul is on his way to Jerusalem, knowing that he will face imprisonment and persecution there. He also has a desire to go to Rome, the capital of the empire, to preach the gospel to the Gentiles. Why does Paul feel compelled to do these things, and what does he want to communicate to the Ephesians before he leaves?

Paul's message to the Ephesians is a farewell speech, full of emotion and affection. He reminds them of his ministry among them, how he served the Lord with humility and tears, and how he did not shrink from declaring to them the whole counsel of God. He also warns them of the coming hardships, both for himself and for them. He tells them that the Holy Spirit testifies that in every city he visits, chains and afflictions await him. He also tells them that after his departure, savage wolves, will come in among them, not sparing the flock. Some of them will even arise from among themselves, as false teachers, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them.

Paul's message is not only a warning, but also an encouragement and a charge. He commends them to God and to the word of His grace, which can build them up and give them an inheritance among all those who are sanctified. He also exhorts them to be on guard for themselves and for all the flock, over which the Holy Spirit has made them overseers. He urges them to shepherd the church of God, which He purchased with His own blood. He also reminds them of his own example of generosity and hard work, and how he supported himself and those who were with him. He quotes the words of Jesus: "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

Why does Paul feel compelled to do these things? Because he is driven by his love for God and his love for people. He is not seeking his own comfort or safety, but he is willing to lay down his life for the sake of the gospel. He is not seeking his own glory or gain, but he is seeking to glorify God and to edify His people. He is not afraid of suffering or death, but he considers his life as nothing, if only he may finish his course and the ministry that he received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.

Paul's final message to the Ephesians is a powerful testimony of his faithfulness and devotion to God and His church. It is also a challenge and an inspiration for us today, as we follow in his footsteps and seek to serve the Lord with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength.

As we study this chapter, we must pray to have our eyes opened to the parallels in our world today. God's Word isn't just a book of history, it is a warning for the church in every age to be aware of who and what is being done and taught.

c. Paul in Ephesus (19:1-41)

1. The Twelve Men (1-7)
2. In the Synagogue & School of Tyrannus (8-10)
3. God Confirming Paul's Message by Miracles (11, 12)

